



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE AMOS TUCK SCHOOL OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

The problems of any school of administration and commerce associated with a college or university are determined to a large extent by local conditions. It seems necessary therefore to preface this statement of problems by a brief survey of the controlling conditions of relationship between the Tuck School and Dartmouth College.

In 1900 the trustees of Dartmouth College decided upon the establishment of a higher school of administration, commerce, and finance. However, they looked upon instruction of that sort as professional in its nature and they wished to guard jealously the established policy that the college is an institution of the arts, humanities, and sciences. They therefore did not introduce the new courses into the curriculum in the ordinary way. They organized an associate school similar to the medical and engineering schools already established at Dartmouth; a school with a two years' course, the first year of which is accepted by the college as equivalent to its Senior year, the second year purely graduate and leading to the degree Master of Commercial Science. Three years of college work consequently are required for admission to the Tuck School. This three years of college work must include sufficient preparation in that modern language which the student intends to study as a commercial language (for the School offers no beginning courses in modern languages), and a sufficient preparation in economics (for that is the foundation upon which the work of the Tuck School is based). Certain restrictions on freedom of elections imposed by the college faculty on its students insure that applicants for admission to the Tuck School shall have been broadly trained and shall not have attempted too early specialization. To be admitted, the applicant must have secured an average standing of not less than 70 per cent for all the ninety hours of work in the three preliminary years, 50 per cent being the passing mark in the college. Mathematical marks do not have much significance, so I will put it this way: the student must have secured

an average for *all* three years' preliminary work which places him practically in the upper half of the pass group. This means that his ranking in economics, the field in which he has been primarily interested because of its close relation to the work of the Tuck School, is usually considerably above that.

This introductory statement suggests the first group of problems with which we have been occupied and concerning which I wish to say a word—problems of admission.

Is the requirement of 70 per cent average for the preliminary ninety hours' work too restrictive? It adds to the quantitative a qualitative requirement. Quantitatively there are required three years of college work; in that respect the Tuck School has not gone so far as one other institution, which requires a college degree for admission. But a college degree may be secured by merely pass work. The Tuck School adds a second requirement—the qualitative requirement of a high average of work; its applicants must be in the three upper groups of the five groups which may secure a college degree. If to secure a large number of students were an ideal of the School, this double requirement would be too severe. Over sixty men applied this year for admission to the School. All were men who will receive their college degrees; not one was near the dividing line between success and failure in that respect. But of the sixty only thirty-nine were admitted. The reason why the School denies itself the larger number of students is, that its ideal of service is to concentrate its efforts on a selected, purposeful group of men who have shown intellectual capacity. Of course the School might admit all pass men and then after a period drop from its roll those who do not show exceptional abilities. But the School believes that an average of less than 70 per cent for the three preliminary years indicates either lack of mental ability or, more probably, lack of seriousness of purpose; and it does not believe it has the right, for the sake of discovering one or two good men in such a group, to lower the quality of its instruction to the other group. Our reasoning along this line has been at no time purely *a priori*: the engineering school at Dartmouth had, for many years before the Tuck School was organized, similarly

selected its men, and the superior quality of its instruction made possible by such selection is reflected in the professional careers of its graduates. The Tuck School is now able to observe the careers of its own graduates, and while such observation has shown us wherein improvement in training is possible, it has not caused us to change our views concerning the selection of material.

In this connection a question may arise. May we not after all secure men who are grinds merely; who acquire but do not assimilate knowledge; who may not have real intellectual power; who are not adapted for business careers; and may we not fail to afford training to men of natural business aptitude who have not secured records mathematically high? We have sympathy for men who have ability, but who have not seen fit in three years of college work to make good records, but we do not see how we can help them. We recognize the danger that high-mark men may lack real intellectual power and business aptitude. We meet this danger by considering our 70 per cent requirement as *prima facie* evidence only. In actual practice, when applications for admission are all in, the Tuck faculty meets informally and invites to the meeting the instructors in economics in the college who have had the applicants in Junior year. This committee of about a dozen instructors takes up each applicant in turn and considers the case on its merits. This committee does not hesitate to advise a man to withdraw his application if, though he has high marks, he still apparently lacks intellectual power, or if he has not the personality and in general the aptitude for a business career. Neither does it hesitate to admit a man whose average is a few points below 70, but who has grown in intellectual power from Freshman to Junior year. In this way the danger of the artificiality of a mathematical mark for entrance is removed.

One other question might be asked concerning admission requirements. To what extent do we specify subjects which a student must offer for admission? The tendency with us has been to decrease specific requirements. The Tuck School believes that a professional school should not influence more than is absolutely necessary the student's preliminary work; should not embarrass an academic faculty in its determination of the proper requirements

for the Bachelor's degree. Intellectual power and scholarly work in general and a sufficient amount of certain fundamental subjects, like economics in particular, are specific enough requirements for our purpose.

The second group of problems with which we have been concerned arises from the relations of the School to the student after he has been admitted. These I divide into three sub-groups: the problems of instruction, the problems of *esprit*, and the problems of vocational guidance.

One of the most important problems relating to instruction is raised by the question: Shall there be free electives and the opportunity for specialization in the curriculum? The Tuck School has allowed this question to work its answer out of experience and the result has been as follows: With respect to the first year of the School, the evolution has been from a curriculum about three-fourths of which was prescribed and the other fourth elective, to a curriculum entirely prescribed and considered as a unit. With respect to the second year of the School, the evolution has been from a curriculum which was believed to allow a considerable degree of choice and specialization to a curriculum which allows limited specialization.

This result does not represent a scheme carefully worked out in advance; it is, as I have said, the answer of experience to our question. Our Master's degrees are granted to students who meet creditably the test of an oral faculty examination on the whole field of their Tuck School work. We soon observed that those students who had taken a certain grouping of courses showed the largest grasp of general fundamental business problems. They entered into discussion more like business men of experience and insight. It was an easy step to advising all men to choose such a group of courses, and an easy step from that to prescribing the group and discontinuing any *extensive* announcement of electives.

We consider it more important, for instance, that all our second-year men be thoroughly grounded in accounting, banking, commercial law, business management, and corporation finance—a requirement which leaves not much time for extensive special

study of a special field of business—than that they be poorly grounded in most of these subjects, fundamental to all business, for the sake of specializing extremely in some one. And there seems to us to be good reasons for this policy. In the first place, details of a particular business are easier to acquire than are fundamental principles, during the apprenticeship which follows formal instruction. In the second place—a fact of great practical significance—students are very likely not to settle finally in that business for the sake of which they have devoted much time to specialization. And in the third place, our experience in experimentally working out a prescribed course of training for the profession of business seems to recapitulate the experience of medical, legal, and engineering education. May it not be a correct generalization that the more a school is professional in its nature and the more its curriculum aims at the development of professional intellectual power rather than the development of an intellectual power which has no specific application, the more likely the curriculum will come to be composed of a group of prescribed courses?

I do not wish to leave the impression that the opportunity we offer our students for preparation for specific careers is unimportant. It is important. A student may make special preparation for, let us say, the profession of accountancy or for service in export and import trade, by (1) taking special courses pertaining to his field not open to other students; (2) choosing for his thesis investigation within the particular field; (3) receiving special personal instruction from the instructor in charge, in connection with the thesis. The specialization thus afforded is considerable. The impression I wish to leave is that such specialization does not *dominate* the work of the second year of the School; that it is something personal to each student and additional to a large body of work in fundamental business subjects prescribed for all students and, on paper at least, occupying the greater part of the time devoted to formal class work.

Another problem of instruction is the problem of method in instruction. At first thought one is inclined to believe that, given a homogeneous group of men of Senior and graduate rank and of tested intellectual power, the proper methods of instruction

are those which aim exclusively at the further development of that power in its application to the solution of business problems, and which are not concerned with the imparting of information. And, in general, that first thought is correct. But it must not be forgotten that these young men upon admission to the Tuck School are entering upon the study of a field of knowledge in which, of course, the principles are the ultimately important things, but of which they know few of the facts. The typical college man, even though he be pretty much a man of affairs in the realm of undergraduate affairs, and even though he has supported himself by labor in vacation and at college, has after all an exceedingly limited knowledge of the facts of business. Parenthetically speaking, I wonder if the lack of ability to write the English language, which we are continually criticizing in our students, may not be after all the lack of ability to write about things of which we assume they have knowledge, but of which they do not have knowledge. In working out a solution of the problem of method in instruction, our aim is to employ such methods as will primarily develop the capacity to comprehend and apply principles, but which secondarily are not neglectful of the necessity which confronts the student of learning the facts of business.

In the first year of the School, therefore, there are employed in some of the courses the old-fashioned methods of conducting classroom exercises which aim at testing the student's acquisition of the important facts of business. But these soon give place to methods—such as the problem or case methods—which we consider far more fruitful because developing the capacity to comprehend and apply principles. And in the latter part of the course an important test of each student's capacity to apply independently his knowledge of principles is made by the requirement of a thesis.

The history of thesis writing with us during ten years is an interesting story by itself. Perhaps I can give you an idea of the changes which have taken place by the following titles. A typical subject of an early thesis is "Trade Opportunities in South America," a thesis obviously primarily descriptive of economic and commercial conditions. Typical titles of 1912 theses are "The Cost Problems of a Shoe Factory"; "The Organization of a Stores

Department for the —— Shoe Factory.” In working on such a thesis the student independently visits a given factory, studies its conditions, methods, and problems, and attempts constructive work. The change in thesis work during the ten years has been from the descriptive to the constructive.

Permit me to revert to the general question of method. What we are attempting to work out is illustrated by the courses in accounting. Most accounting instructors begin with laboratory work in bookkeeping. In the Tuck School such laboratory work is deferred for several months and it never becomes a principal part of the work. The first months are devoted to the balance sheet and the income account; to a discussion of what they are, why they are; to a discussion of every possible thing which may affect them; of the cause of every change which appears in a succession of balance sheets. In that way a student comes to comprehend principles and to think—to coin a word—accountingly. The matter of practice bookkeeping becomes merely incidental; its purpose is to familiarize a student with the tools. This method we are attempting to carry into all our courses. Most textbooks on corporation finance are devoted to a *description* of different securities and methods. You will find that Professor Lyon’s book on *Capitalization* continually asks and explains *why* in corporation finance. In it, description, while reasonably complete, remains secondary.

Another problem of instruction is the administrative problem of securing instructors. The first schools of higher commercial education had to start with instructing forces which were the product of the conventional graduate school of economics. And the curricula of such teaching staffs were bound to resemble closely the curricula of graduate schools of economics, to lack the merit of being homogeneous *professional* curricula. The work in higher schools of commerce seems to have developed beyond the capacity of the young Ph.D. fresh from the economics department of the graduate school. It requires men especially trained. The most desirable instructors are those with exceptional training in economics and business followed by successful experience in business. Some may question the necessity for business experience, but I am

convinced that the instructor who has had successful business experience brings into the classroom qualities which make his scholarship doubly effective. The prestige of having "made good," and the capacity to illustrate principles by examples drawn from experience give such an instructor power to arouse at once the enthusiasm and the initiative of his students.

Among the problems arising out of the relations of a school with the students, are the problems of *esprit*. The business world is not wrong when it says the average college graduate is not adaptable to business and remains for a time a piece of raw material which it is expensive to fashion. The difficulty arises not from a lack of physical and intellectual capacity; it arises from the attitude of mind which the college develops in the student. He is indifferent; he has had too little experience with responsibility; he is impatient of small things and beginners' salaries. The Tuck School is of the opinion that it is a part of the duty of a higher school preparing young men for business to overcome so far as possible that attitude of mind in the student, and to use every reasonable device and a reasonable portion of its funds in doing so. I can do no more than categorically state some of its methods of attacking the problem. For the purpose of developing a group *esprit*, it has its own building, and its own library policed more or less informally. In the two college courses into which it sends its students they are handled as a separate group of men; are seated as a separate group in lecture periods, and met as a separate group for quiz purposes. This results not only in the development of group *esprit* but in a scholarship of better average than that of college groups. The Tuck School has built and furnished in its basement a lounging-room intended to serve the Tuck students as a distinct group in the way that College Hall serves the college as a whole. Every possible method is employed to enable students to meet business men—lecturers—personally, and the lectures of such men are followed by a simple luncheon intended to enable the second-year men to meet the lecturers informally. Finally, the idea that thesis work shall be based upon visits to industrial plants is encouraged by the desire that our students shall see and feel such a plant in action.

I have not the time to do more than throw out the suggestion that this separate group treatment permits a more restrictive discipline—as regards attendance, for example—than is applicable to the general body of college students. This more restrictive discipline is a foretaste of the discipline of the business world. We have not solved the problem of *esprit*; we are still working at it; but we are confident that the steps we have taken have led to fruitful results.

Another problem arising out of the relations of the School to the student is the problem of finding for students the opportunities for business service to which they are respectively adapted. We believe that one responsibility of the School is to act as a clearing-house, a labor intelligence bureau, to bring together worthy young men and concerns seeking good apprenticeship material. An interesting phase of the problem with us is, that our students are nearly all without pulls in the matter of securing positions. Except for the School their only course would be to walk the streets of a city and call at offices or watch for signs: "Boy Wanted." The school has received, without effort on its part, inquiries for men in excess of the number of graduates, but we can foresee the time when some organized system of informing the business world of our product should be worked out. Not only is there involved the problem of securing *some* position for the graduate; there is involved the problem of securing *the* position for which the graduate is adapted, of adjusting capacity to service.

A third group of problems arises out of the relations of the School to the public. The School recognizes that it has such an obligation as well as its obligation to the student. But it is our judgment that our primary obligation is to the student, and the first and largest draft which the instructor should make on his store of time and energy should be on behalf of the individual student. We attempt to develop in our instructing staff the feeling that instruction is not something formal but is a personal responsibility for the personal success of every individual student. That, we conceive, as also our largest public service. But without impairing that obligation to the individual student, we believe

other forms of public service possible and obligatory. The theses, intended primarily to enable students to develop the power to apply principles to the solution of business problems, represent the accumulation of a fund of results in original investigation which will some day be of service to all of us. Each year a few theses are added to our files which are of positive value to succeeding generations of students. It is possible that before long the results of some of these investigations may be given to the public.

A second opportunity for service to the public is the opportunity to inspire higher business ethics in those who pass through the School. We do not attempt any formal instruction in business ethics. We believe that the formality and artificiality of a formal course in business ethics would defeat its very purpose. But in every course it is the aim of every instructor, I know, to inspire in his students a conception of the nobility of the profession of the business man and of his responsibility to his fellow-men and to society.

Another opportunity for service to the public, as well as to our students, is the calling of conferences intended to inspire business men, who are naturally conservative, with an interest in the latest and most efficient methods in the conduct of business and with an interest in the intelligent solution of public problems affecting business. The Tuck School held such a conference for the first time a year ago, and the response was such that I believe I can safely say that the School is committed to the policy of holding such conferences periodically.

H. S. PERSON

AMOS TUCK SCHOOL
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE